

THE PHOENIX AWARD

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The phoenix is a mythical bird, which is consumed in flames, then rises from its own ashes. It symbolizes immortality, resurrection, and life after death. So it is fitting that an award for superior maintenance, which gives new and sustained life to equipment and weapons systems, be named for the phoenix.

The Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards honor six military maintenance organizations for outstanding performance. The awardees—two each in the small, medium, and large categories—are chosen from active and reserve

units that perform maintenance at the intermediate or unit level (below the depot level). One of them—singled out as the very best—receives the Phoenix Award.

The organizations recognized in 1999 range from small—the 47 personnel of the Naval Security Group Activity Groton—to large—the over 2,000 maintenance professionals of the Air Force's 3rd Wing. But what they all have in common is their unsurpassed spirit of dedication and excellence. In brief, these are their stories.



1999 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
MAINTENANCE AWARDS



WE FIX SHIPS

This simple motto of the Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity (SIMA) Norfolk, this year's Phoenix Award winner, tells it all. Not only is it the only intermediate maintenance activity routinely performing fleet maintenance for the surface ships, aircraft carriers, and submarines that constitute one-third of the entire inventory of Navy ships, but it is teamed with Norfolk Naval Shipyard to support 11 functional regional repair centers—the most in any region.

SIMA Norfolk, a maintenance unit in the large category, has performed many and varied tasks in the last year. It completed 28,000 jobs in support of the Washington, Sennis, and Eisenhower battle groups and the Guam, Wasp, and Saipan amphibious readiness groups, while simultaneously supporting an average of 20 fleet maintenance activities. It also became the first SIMA certified to perform SUBSAFE work (i.e., critically controlled work to ensure hull integrity) as well as submarine weapons repair.

During a period characterized by exceptionally heavy workloads, SIMA Norfolk pioneered numerous initiatives, increasing their maintenance production by 20 percent over the previous year and saving the Department of Defense \$23 million. In particular, through the continuous maintenance concept, it further enhanced command repair services, resulting in improved overall Fleet material readiness.

By their continuous display of professionalism, determination, and resourcefulness, the officers, chief petty officers, and crew, both active and reserve, of SIMA Norfolk set the benchmark for other maintenance activities. They are truly deserving of this year's Phoenix Award.



Phoenix Award Winner

GREASE, MUD, AND DIRT

The Ground Mobility Division (GMD), 1st Battalion, 81st Armor Regiment, is a well-oiled machine with a reputation throughout the Army for maintenance excellence. The GMD, an awardee in the small category, maintains M55 recovery vehicles that operate over a sprawling, mud-infested, 6,500-acre training range—some of the most unyielding terrain in this country. It is in this harsh, unyielding operational environment that GMD sustains unmatched professional excellence—through the synergy of leaders, soldiers, and civilians.

During the last year, the result of this combination was a 94 percent operational readiness rate, well above the Army standard, in support of a fleet of combat recovery and tactical wheeled vehicles that logged over 51,000 miles—nearly four times the Army's norm.

The "Grease, Mud, and Dirt" soldiers of the GMD completed every task, accomplished every mission, and exceeded every requirement, despite an acute shortage of maintenance personnel.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Naval Security Group Activity Groton, the other awardee in the small category, installs and deinstalls submarine cryptologic systems. It provides underway maintenance of these systems for over 40 fast attack submarines deployed in support of Atlantic Fleet, Naval Forces Europe, Southern Command, and Central Command taskings.

During the last year, these Fleet Electronic Support personnel installed and deinstalled equipment at Groton and Norfolk and provided on-the-spot maintenance at various foreign ports in the Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas, and the Persian Gulf. This small activity spent 8,500 man-days deployed or in temporary assignments, logging more than 48,000 road miles through six states with absolutely no mishaps—carrying every piece of sensitive electronic equipment to its intended installation.

Their teams aggressively met tasking requirements—on time, every time—to successfully complete 42 installations, 27 removals, 11 emergent technical support requirements, and over 60 underway support requirements.



JUGGLING ACT



As one of the busiest and most deployed units in the Marine Corps, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-12 (MAVS-12), a winner in the medium category, routinely overcomes unique and significant challenges. The MAVS-12 maintenance department supports 46 tactical fixed-wing aircraft of 5 different type/model/series—

the EA-6B electronic warfare system, F/A-18A and C single-seat fighter/attack aircraft, F/A-18D dual-seat fighter/attack aircraft, and the AV-8B vertical/short take-off attack aircraft.

Poised at the southern tip of mainland Japan, MAVS-12 is far removed from an industrial-type support infrastructure and its main source of supply—the average shipping time for high-priority parts from CONUS is 8 to 10 days. During the last year, the MAVS-12 maintenance support umbrella included detachments deployed to northern Japan and Okinawa, Korea, Thailand, Australia, Wake Island, and the Persian Gulf.

Their powerplant division performed the highest degree of repair outside the industrial depots for 4 different types of engines and 12 different engine modules for Naval and Marine Corps units throughout the entire western Pacific, Persian Gulf, and Indian Ocean. The Marauders met every challenge and exceeded all goals through superior technical expertise, inspired leadership, and a total team effort.



PERFECT BLEND

The Air Force blends its active duty and reserve units in a unique way. During peacetime, 749th Air Generation Squadron (AGS) Air Force Reserve personnel

work and train with military members in their active duty counterpart, the 660th AGS. When mobilized, these personnel become full-time military partners of the 660th to provide maintenance for 60th Air Mobility Wing aircraft.

The 660th and 749th AGSs, from Travis Air Force Base, are awardees in the medium category. They have distinguished themselves by performing superior aircraft maintenance through-



out the last year. In support of Operations Phoenix Scorpion I and Southern Watch, these dedicated men and women demonstrated outstanding initiative, teamwork, and performance during the unprecedented deployment of 19 KC-10 aircraft, 133 maintenance personnel, and well over 1,700 pieces of equipment—to 3 separate locations in just 5 days.

In support of Operation Phoenix Scorpion II, they again demonstrated their prowess during the deployment of 7 KC-10 aircraft and 84 maintenance personnel. During this period, the Travis team wrote the book on reducing the maintenance footprint for multiple air expeditionary force deployments by developing load plans, paring and tailoring maintenance packages, and streamlining personnel requirements.

From The Ashes...



ARCTIC WARRIORS



During the last year, maintenance professionals of the 3rd Wing, Elmendorf Air Force Base, AK—on awardee in the large category—exhibited exceptional innovation, teamwork, and a warrior spirit in providing the Air Force with unsurpassed lethal combat capability.

In February's Operation Indy Backfill, their readiness was put to the test when they executed a no-notice deployment to Kwang Ju Air Base, Republic of Korea, as the 3rd Air Expeditionary Group (AEG). The 3 AEG was created to maintain stability in the Korean theater, establishing the first Pacific Air Forces Air Expeditionary Force.

Concurrently, the 3rd Wing deployed 18 F-15C aircraft to Prince Sultan Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in support of Operation Southern Watch. Its personnel teamed up with the 19th and 54th Fighter Squadrons, maintaining 18 F-15s and producing 988 sorties and almost 4,000 flying hours.

Accepting nothing less than the best, it commanded the attention of the Department of Defense during the Air Mobility Command's Rodeo '98 competition, where the 3rd Wing (typically considered a fighter wing) walked away with the top six airlift trophies, including Best Air Mobility Wing.

REPRESENTING EXCELLENCE

As the Phoenix Award completes its 15th year, maintenance organizations are facing greater challenges supporting the armed services in their fulfillment of global commitments. Because of the many outstanding maintenance teams throughout the armed forces—all of whom demonstrate, day in and day out, the same winning energy these awards signify—it is difficult to choose just six as representatives. Maintenance organizations worldwide have shown a devotion to excellence, a spirit of flexibility, and an intense drive to keep equipment in the field using less resources. These six represent the way that these men and women have used innovative thinking and round-the-clock dedication to carry out their complex missions—jobs that are an integral part of our Armed Forces' warfighting capability.



...The
Phoenix
Arises